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ZION BUILT, THE GLORY OF THE LORD.

CONSIDERED IN A

S E R M O N

PREACHED AT A

MONTHLY EXERCISE,

ON ACCOUNT OF

The Present State of Public Affairs;

AT THE

REV. JAMES KELLO'S MEETING-HOUSE,

I N

LITTLE St. HELEN'S,

FEBRUARY. 19, 1783.

BY N. H I L L. *K*

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TO

THOSE REVEREND MINISTERS,

THE APPROVED FRIENDS OF THEIR COUNTRY

IN ITS MOST ESSENTIAL INTERESTS,

BY WHOM THIS SERMON WAS CANDIDLY HEARD,

AND AT WHOSE REQUEST MADE PUBLIC,

IT IS DEDICATED,

WITH THE UTMOST RESPECT,

BY

THEIR AFFECTIONATE FRIEND,

BROTHER,

AND OBEDIENT SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

THESE DEAR FRIENDS OF THEIR COUNTRY
IN ITS MOST CRITICAL MOMENT

BY WHOM THIS SERVICE WAS CORDIALLY HEARD
AND AT WHOSE REQUEST MADE PUBLIC

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WITH THE MOST RESPECT

THESE AFFECTIONATE FRIENDS

RECEIVED

AND OBEYANT SERVICE

THE AUTHOR

A

S E R M O N.

ALTHOUGH some signal advantages have been gained over our common enemy, and the face of public affairs so greatly changed since these solemn meetings begun, that we have now the prospect of an end being soon put to the horrors of a war we have so much deplored; there is yet much to be done by every friend to his country and religion. The private woes which this war hath occasioned—the enormous load of debt it hath brought upon the nation—the dissevering America from the British empire—the great uncertainty there is what course our trade and commerce, so essential to the civil interest of Britain, will take on the termination of the war—and the abundant reason there is to apprehend that we, as a nation, have not been suitably humbled and affected under the mighty hand of God; will touch every pious and patriotic breast among us.

Under the influence of hope and fear, of pain and pleasure; and with the most sincere desire of promoting that very important end for which we are now assembled; I have chosen as the ground of the following discourse, those words in

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B

PSALM

P S A L M CII. 16.

WHEN THE LORD SHALL BUILD UP ZION, HE
SHALL APPEAR IN HIS GLORY.

Whoever was the author of this Psalm, David, or some later prophet, he discovers a pious and devotional spirit, a heart deeply impressed with the state of Zion, and a firm and pleasing assurance that “ a time to favour her would come.”

The state of grace and piety in a country—in a church—and even in one soul; is a matter of greater moment than we are able to tell you. If it does not lie with prevailing weight upon us who preach the gospel, we are so far from being approved ministers, that we are not christians, nor have we one spark of the piety or benevolence of the glorious founder of christianity. For what end more important can we speak, act, or exist, than to rouse the secure in sin—introduce christian principles into the souls of men—warm, strengthen, and animate the heart of each cold and languid believer—and promote, through grace, in these times that seriousness of spirit, that unshaken attachment to the Son of God, that holy fire of zeal and devotion, and that experimental godliness, which are so essential to the real prosperity of our country, and which distinguished the more happy ages of the church. Religion is that which alone can secure and perpetuate our glory as a nation, and which, if lost, every thing worth living for, is lost too. What, O Britain! is thy martial fame—thy commerce, arts and learning—those watery walls which God hath placed

placed around thee—thy boasted liberty—or even that sun which shines upon thee; when compared to this?

“ When the Lord shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory.”

As Zion in its prosperous and happy state was a city of great resort, strength and defence—as its inhabitants were governed by the same laws, and yielded subjection to the same Head—as their most valuable interests were the same—as their privileges were superior to those of any other city—and as it was a place more immediately under the eye, patronage, and protection of Jehovah; it may not unfitly represent the church of God. In this accommodation of my text, I am more than justified by Jehovah's own language, in reference to gospel times, in Isaiah lx. 14. “ They shall call thee the City of the Lord, the Zion of the Holy One of Israel.”

Under this idea we may observe that Zion may lie for a time in a somewhat ruinous condition—that it is the province of God to build it—that in this great work he will certainly engage—and that he will appear in his glory when Zion is built.

I. We may observe, that even Zion may lie for a time in a somewhat ruinous condition.

The exact state of real religion in the world, a nation, an individual church, or a single soul, can be known only to God. Outward appearance is a very uncertain rule of judging. The world hath oft condemned those whom God approved, and applauded those whom God condemned. Even the prophet Elijah was greatly mistaken

when he said, "I, even I only am left(a)." The genuine disciple of Jesus sounds no trumpet before him. His religion is not a noisy, ostentatious thing; but an humble walk with God. It enters his inmost soul, and influences him where no eye, except the eye of God, can see him. Yet, nothing is more plain than that religion hath flourished differently in different periods. There have been some golden ages in the church of God—ages in which there was an apparent intercourse between heaven and earth; and in which the presence of God was more eminently among men. The word of God does not always come with equal power. In the same society, grace and piety do not always equally flourish; and it is too plain that a certain degree of languor and indifference hath seized some churches in Britain that were once distinguished by their faith and piety, zeal and spirit.

Now, the state of Zion is to be wept over when but few are converted—when a preached gospel does not reach the heart—and when pardon, grace, and salvation are not seen, and acknowledged, to be the most important objects that can be attended to or pursued. When the children of pious Parents have no piety, no concern to attain one virtue or grace that adorns their fathers, or to rise, when they die, to that glorious state to which those from whom they are descended are gone or going: and if, when the pillars in our churches begin to fall, few or none are rising up of a serious, pious, public spirit; what

(a) 1 Kings xix. 10.

what an unfavourable aspect does Zion wear ! Can we expect that they will speak and act for God and Christ, and exert themselves that the glorious cause of christianity may be maintained, who have never been convinced of sin or danger, nor brought to God, through Christ, in the way of faith and repentance ? If we who preach the gospel could imagine, for a moment, that among the people of our choice, care and affection, no deep and serious impressions were made—no dark souls enlightened—no stony heart softened—and none of those chains broken in which sinners are held ; what must our feelings be ! If this be the unhappy case, oh ! it is merciful in God to conceal it from us. } Zion's walls are broken when the gospel is heard by men without attention to their concern in it, or to his authority whose it is, and who is speaking by it—when they do not study the gospel in a manner corresponding with its divine original and unspeakable importance—when they can content themselves with vague and uncertain conceptions of God who, offended, offers mercy ; of Christ, in the divine dignity of his person and characters ; of the way of salvation by him ; and of themselves as to their real state by nature and practice. If men see not how the perfections of God harmonize under the gospel dispensation, and what lustre is cast upon them—if, with their persuasion of the truth of the gospel, they do not enter into the genuine spirit of its doctrines, precepts, promises and threatenings—if the views they have of their own condition, their need of a Saviour, and the wis-

dom

dom and compassion of the appointment; do not so impress their hearts, as to bring them to the feet of mercy—if their depraved and sinful propensities give law to their conduct—if it is not their first and warmest wish, that “the law of the spirit of life, which is in Christ Jesus may make them free from the law of sin and death,” nor their fervent prayer and daily endeavour that they may be a living gospel, examples of its graces, and trophies of its victory; the friends of Zion will bewail her state.

The Zion of God in the midst of us is in a state to be bewailed when many of the professors of religion draw back, and the enemy of souls hath so far prevailed as to lessen the number of the pious. When a worldly and carnal, proud or contentious spirit, or any other proceeding from the same corrupt source, makes inroads among christians, carries them off from those societies to which they belonged, and from that allegiance they owed and professed to Christ; her walls are broken.

And the same may be said when the religious character of those who compose the church of God is low. When those who belong to Christ are weak in faith, and inconstant in their affections—when they are so immersed in the cares and concerns of this world as that they move but slowly on the road to that for which they were born, and to which they ought ever to aspire—when they do not attend the house of God with that constancy, pleasure, and profit they once did—when they read not the word of God with
that

that relish and self-application they formerly experienced—and when the warmth of their pious zeal and devotion is abated, the church is in an unhappy state. What the friends of Zion wish, and what Zion's King must expect, is that religion be alive in the souls of its votaries—that it appear to be so—that the foundation be not only laid but built upon—and that the divine work daily rise more firm and stately until “the head-stone thereof shall be brought forth with shoutings, crying, grace, grace unto it (b).” Neither the church of Christ at large, nor any individual church, can be said to flourish, however numerous the members of that church may be, if any attainments in grace and piety are rested in—if there be not that “forgetting the things which are behind, that reaching forth to those things which are before, and that pressing toward the mark for the prize of the high calling which is of God in Christ Jesus (c),” of which the apostle Paul was an example—and if believers do not recommend and adorn their profession. Persecution hath wasted, and may yet waste, the church of God: but we have more serious fears from another quarter, namely, a spirit of indifference, cold and languid graces, and the many declensions of God's own people. When the citizens of Zion do not seem, by their walk and conversation, to be so determined for God, Christ and heaven as they ought—when their christianity, instead of cleaving close to them, hangs loose, like a garment they can spare—and when they stand not forth in their respective

(b) Zech. iv. 17.

(c) Phil. iii. 13, 14.

respective families, in the religious societies to which they belong, and in the world, examples of seriousness and piety, and incontestable proofs of the happy and glorious effects of the gospel when it comes with power upon the heart; Zion's best friends will lament on her account. Which leads me to add, that

In whatever period of the church the generality of professors are remiss in certain *great Duties* that are incumbent upon them, some of Zion's walls are fallen. When for instance, the great duties of the *Closet* are neglected—when no conscience is made of retiring from a gay or busy world, to meditate on the things of God, and to enter into a serious and close examination how matters stand between the soul and Him; there is an affecting breach in the wall of Zion. If professors do not converse with their own hearts, that they may know what is wrong in them with a view to its being corrected; what is weak, that it may be strengthened; and what there is of a real work of grace, that it may be promoted; the church does not flourish. If they retire not that things future and eternal may be familiarized—that objects the most interesting the human soul can know may be, as it were, present with them—and that what they hear in the house of God may be recollected, better understood, and brought home to the heart; the state of the church wears a dark and gloomy appearance. The glorious cause of the Redeemer hath little to expect from those professors who neglect secret prayer—who unbosom not their whole souls before God—and who wrestle not with Him,

Him, when no eye sees them, for pardoning mercy, sanctifying grace, justifying righteousness, and larger communications of himself to their souls. At the closet door apostacy commonly begins; and I am firmly persuaded that the attention that was paid to secret religious exercises was one grand reason why some past ages of the church outshone the present. Since the church of God is composed of individuals, it is not to be expected that it will rise and flourish until men are brought upon their knees before God in secret, and the closet becomes, what it was to our pious ancestors, a favourite place. Oh! that our hearers universally knew what that soul loses who cannot enjoy an hour alone! What is the company of the most instructive and engaging friend, that friend for whom one would almost dare to die, when compared with that of ones own soul, and His who died to save it? There certainly is a far more intimate connexion between the private walk of the christian, and the exemplariness and dignity of his life and deportment, than is generally supposed. From places where no eye saw, where no ear heard, issued those great characters that exalted the christian name, made head against, and astonished an opposing world, and to which we look up with respect and veneration.

And there is another duty which hath been more than once touched upon in these solemn services, which, if professors neglect, the Zion of God in Britain will lie in an unhappy condition, and that is, *Family Prayer*. If they have

family mercies to acknowledge, and joint interests to represent before God—if praying families are more open to the influence of the love and grace of our heavenly Father than others—if those daily favours that proceed from God in answer to prayer are always the sweetest—if it is the honour and happiness of a family to have God shine upon it, and dwell in the midst of it—if those families are not only the most pleasing to behold, but the happiest upon earth, in which, as in the Temple, the morning and evening sacrifice is offered up daily on the altar before God—if the good influence which family devotion is likely to have on those who stand at the head of families, on the hearts of the rising generation, and on the Redeemer's cause in the world, admits of no debate—if the family altar hath been kept up by the wisest and the best in every past age—and if those in our own country who made the noblest stand for the cause of Christ, and who chose to meet death in every dreadful form rather than desert their principles, dishonour christianity and give up their hopes, were not only devout in secret, but called their families together constantly as the day, and in their presence read the scriptures, and spread their mercies, sins, dangers and wants before God, and implored his compassion, grace, and guardian arm, with all the seriousness and fervour of the soul; how much to be deplored must the state of religion be in a country, or in a christian society, when this great duty is neglected! We must
consider

consider every house as falling if not fallen, where the family altar is in ruins. How should children learn the importance of prayer, and of openly acknowledging that God, without whom they cannot be happy, safe, or even exist through a single day; and that Jesus, whose mediation lies at the foundation of every hope a fallen creature can indulge; if their parents, who may be esteemed in the world, and whom they are taught to regard and revere, neglect both? If there be scarce a parent in our assemblies but would, if dying, wish that his children might never spend a single day without prayer, why does he not now set them an example? Suppose me at the head of a family which God protects by night, and makes happy by day. What can be more apparently fit and reasonable than that I convene this family, and in the best manner I am able, pour out my soul in grateful praise, and fervent prayer? The neglect of this is one of the great crimes of the age—a crime for which God seems now to be visiting some christian societies—and it contributes much more to lay religion waste than men seem, in these times, to imagine. The neglect of that of which I am now speaking, is itself a great breach in the walls of Zion: and it is not my opinion alone that many of those altars must be repaired, that are now fallen into decay; many new ones erected; and more conscience made than now is of surrounding those altars daily; before Zion can be built.

I should not approve myself faithful to my Divine Master, or be a friend of Zion, if I did not point out another duty, the neglect of which will always occasion an unpromising and gloomy appearance on the church of God, namely, a devout attendance on the *Sacramental Supper*. Although we hope and trust there is a divine work in the souls of many who do not grant the Saviour his dying request; it is a disheartening circumstance when, out of a numerous congregation, a very small part only eat bread and drink wine in a believing and affectionate remembrance of him who is the light of this dark, and the life of this dead world. When there is but here and there a guest when the table of Christ is spread, even whilst the nature of the duty is well understood—the obligations to it such as none can dispute—the ingratitude to Christ which attends the neglect of it, seen—and the many beneficial consequences, through grace, arising from it acknowledged, Zion's walls are falling. If, whilst the language of multitudes in this christian country is “I am not fit—I do not see my way clear to the table of Christ—I am apprehensive I should not be a welcome guest;” they do not, in their closets, confess and bewail this, and daily and fervently pray to God that he would embitter sin to them—increase their faith and love—sanctify them more thoroughly by his word and spirit—enable them to withstand temptation to whatever would be unbecoming the most public profession of regard for, and attachment to Christ—and cause his banner over them

them to be love; the appearance of things, in a religious view, is unpromising and gloomy.

From this view of Zion when in ruins, let me turn your thoughts to the

II. Remark, namely, That to build up Zion is the work and province of God.

The inspired author of this Psalm well knew that without God the breaches that had been made in Zion of old would never be repaired, and that, whatever those ruins were in which she lay, they would remain.

And with respect to the church of God, it is a truth that it never hath risen, and that it never will rise without Him—that without Him there will not be even a single stone of the divine building laid in any heart. Neither the Prophets under the Jewish, nor the Apostles under the Christian dispensation, expected any success in the great work in which they were engaged, without God. We find them ascribing to God, not only the success they met with, but the very concern they felt and the zeal they express for the maintenance and increase of his glorious cause among fallen men.

But before I enter on the discussion of this point, that to build up Zion is the work and province of God; let me shew in a few particulars when it is that Zion, or the church of God, may be said to be built. Having placed Zion before you when she is the triumph of her enemies, and the lamentation of her friends, I would now present you with a more pleasing object, Zion built—the

the cause of God and Christ flourishing among us. Oh ! may God grant, and grant it soon, that the churches to which we respectively belong, may exemplify every article I am about to mention.

When there were added to the church, under one sermon, not less than three thousand souls (*d*); what a transporting prospect must it open on the first preachers of the gospel ! This would encourage them in their work, and engage them to persist in proclaiming an incarnate, crucified, risen, ascended, and exalted Saviour, whatever opposition they might meet with from the powers of earth or darkness.

If, throughout this land, the evidence with which the gospel is attended was duly weighed—if mens belief of its truth and divine original, besides being well founded, was strong, inwrought—if they considered the gospel as a message from the great God addressed to them on affairs of infinite moment, and had constant recourse to it as to the only infallible standard of doctrine, discipline and practice ; a pleasing prospect would open upon us. When a certain energy attends the word—when, besides being heard, understood and believed, it is brought home to the heart, its power generally felt, and it becomes a sharp two-edged sword in the Saviour's hand, separating between sinners and their sins, and every false delusive and dangerous dependance ; there is a sure and happy proof that God is building Zion. When the walls of Zion are rising, those representations which the gospel gives of the world in general, and of human

(*d*) Acts iii. 41.

man nature in particular, will affect the soul—convictions of sin and danger will be strong, lively and permanent—the provision which the gospel makes for ruined creatures will be received with the utmost cordiality—the Saviour will be regarded in every view in which he is proposed, and embraced under every character he sustains—a new nature will be introduced into souls—a divine life will be begun, and the passions, affections, and powers of men will be sanctified, placed on their most proper objects, and directed to the noblest ends that creatures can pursue. The Zion of God is composed of living stones, which the unconverted are not. When our churches rise and flourish, this will be the enquiry of the Young, “How may we escape the wrath to come? To whom must we go that our guilt may be removed, our nature renewed, the work of grace and piety advanced, our persons justified, and our souls saved? How may our father’s God become our God, and we brought into, and kept in, that covenant relation to Jehovah in which the highest honour, dignity, and happiness of our souls consist?” If there was a prevailing concern about the things of Christ—if the genuine marks of a sound conversion were every where conspicuous—and if the grand object of the pursuit of Britons was that they might be built upon, and built up in Christ, we might say, in the language of the Psalmist, that “the time to favour Zion, yea, the set time is come.”

When

When the breaches in Zion are repaired, those who are converted will stand fast in the faith, and recommend, adorn, and dignify their profession. They will be inclined and enabled to build upon the foundation which grace lays in the soul. When Zion is built, those who belong to Christ will see and feel it to be their interest and duty to keep close to him, to stand firm amidst all the assaults of the world and satan, and to follow Christ with undiminished zeal. If we, as a professing people, oppose the entrance of every thing that is counter to the gospel—esteem the enemies of the Redeemer our enemies, and go out against them “strong in the Lord, and in the power of his “might”—if our first and prevailing concern is that we may wear the Saviour’s image now, and be clothed with his righteousness for ever—and if this is apparent from our conduct and pursuit, that we had rather lose every thing than Christ and salvation ; we are living stones, and God is building up Zion among us. When faith gains fresh strength, and sin and satan lose ground, in the hearts and lives of men ; and when those who name the name of Christ are formed into the mould of the gospel, breathe its genuine spirit, experience the growth of an heavenly temper, and have love to God and the Redeemer as a lively and governing principle in their souls ; Zion’s walls are rising. The church is in its prosperous state, when those who belong to it speak and act for Christ—recommend the gospel by the silent yet forcible eloquence of a pious deportment—and
this

this is become the habitual language of souls, may
 “ I never disgrace my christian profession—may I
 “ hold up my Saviour and his religion to view in
 “ the most engaging point of light—may Christ, his
 “ graces, and salvation, become more precious to
 “ my soul every day I spend—and may it appear in
 “ me, that it is christianity communicates the chief
 “ excellence and dignity to human nature and to
 “ human life.” When Zion is built in any place
 religion will be kept up in souls, and that flame
 that is kindled by the breath of God will never
 be extinguished. There will be no forsaking the
 temple of God. Sabbaths will be kept as our
 pious fathers kept them. Good impressions that
 may be made, will, through grace, be perpetua-
 ted; every holy resolution will be strengthened;
 and every spark of love and devotion cherished
 that may rise in the soul. Those houses that are
 built for God will be full—crouds will attend the
 table of Christ—and welcome the morning of those
 days with peculiar pleasure on which they are
 called to do public honour to God, and to avow
 their love and allegiance to him who lived, ex-
 pired, and is interceding for them. Holy fire will
 be brought from the house of God into the houses
 and closets of believers; and none of those excuses
 which many now plead, of engagements, business
 or pleasure, to justify their omission of family and
 secret devotion, will be either admitted or thought
 on. When Zion is built, the great and leading
 question will be “ what do I owe to God, to others
 “ and myself? What does my God and Saviour
 D “ expect,

“ expect, and what shall I wish to have done,
 “ or been, when I shall stand with the assembled
 “ world before the judgment seat ?”

When Zion is built, Christ will be received as the only Saviour, King and Head. “ As there is
 “ salvation in no other—as there is none other
 “ name given under heaven, among men, whereby
 “ we must be saved (*e*)—as he is the way, the
 “ truth and the life—as no man cometh to the
 “ Father but by him (*f*)—as the language of Jehovah is, behold I lay in Zion for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner
 “ stone, a sure foundation, (*g*)—and as other
 “ foundation can no man lay than that is laid,
 “ which is Jesus Christ (*b*);” whatever building is raised, it is no building of God, no part of Zion, if it is not built upon Him. When the cause of Christ shall have its great and signal triumph, souls will repair to the Son of God to be taught, ruled and saved—what he enjoins will be universally binding upon conscience—and pardon, grace, and salvation will be sought as flowing from the sovereign grace of God through the channel of the Redeemer’s sufferings, death and mediation. They will build on a gospel foundation, and after the gospel plan; for they will see sin and themselves as he represents both—they will consider Christ as standing in the sinner’s room and stead; his death as a propitiatory sacrifice; and his merit and righteousness as the ground of their justification. They will go to Christ—they will receive him

(*e*) Acts iv. 12.

(*f*) John xiv. 6.

(*g*) Isaiah xxviii. 16.

(*b*) 1 Cor. iii. 2.

him with heart-felt gratitude and pleasure—place their dependance upon him—seek pardon, justification and life in and through him—and ask it of God, with all possible fervour, that he would form in them the Saviour's spirit, and render their lives scenes of devotedness to him. It is not a crowd that makes a church of Christ. Such, and such only, constitute it who have been brought to him in the way of faith and repentance, who are determined, in divine strength, to maintain their allegiance to him as sole King and Head, and whose prevailing wish and fervent prayer is that they may be a sweet savour in Christ, and stand among men the monuments of his grace, and the ornament and glory of the christian name. When Zion is built that prophecy will be fulfilled, “in that day shall there be one Lord, and his name one (*i*):” and this will be the language of millions, “unto him that loved us, and washed us “from our sins in his own blood, and hath made “us kings and priests unto God and his Father, to “him be glory and dominion for ever and ever(*k*).”

When Zion is built those who compose it will be held together by the ties of love. “By this,” says Christ, “shall all men know that ye are “my disciples, if ye have love one to another(*l*).” Such a stress does the Saviour lay on mutual love, and a warm and steady attachment between the members of his church, that it is his dying advice that they should “abide together in him;” and one great subject of his prayer to his heaven-

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(*i*) Zech. xiv. 9. (*k*) Rev. i. 5, 6. (*l*) John xiii. 35.

ly Father was that “ they all might be one, as the
 “ Father was in him, and he in the Father, and
 “ that they might be one in them(*m*).” Believers,
 having the same obstacles to surmount—the same
 enemies to encounter—the same covenant relation
 to God and Christ—the same privileges, graces,
 hopes, and prospects—and being on their way to
 the same glorious state, where they expect to be
 partakers of the same inheritance, to inhabit one
 house, and constitute one happy family for ever;
 mutual forbearance, gentleness of manners, and a
 constant and unaffected concern to promote each
 others interest and happiness, should, and will, dis-
 tinguish them from the rest of the world. Where
 the gospel comes with power, and the Saviour’s
 image is really formed in the heart, there will be
 a tender concern for the good of others, especially
 of those who belong “ to the household of faith.”
 If faith does not work in this way, it is not that
 divine principle on which so much stress is laid
 in the word of God. The first converts to chris-
 tianity considered themselves as the several parts
 of the same body, the head, the life and strength of
 which was Christ. They were united, had one heart,
 and this was a part of the grand secret of that noble
 firmness they exemplified, and the brave opposition
 they made against the efforts of a world in arms.
 Doth not history record instances in which a few,
 whose hands and hearts were one, have routed vast
 armies, deposed great kings, and overrun the largest
 empires that ever subsisted? My brethren! *our*
 strength

(*m*) John xvii. 21.

strength consists in a steady attachment to each other, and to that Jesus, who as a captain, wise and faithful, generous and mighty, leads on his favourite band, through an opposing, dangerous and wondering world, to a kingdom and a crown. It is one of the things to be wept over, in this age, that the hearts of believers are not drawn so close to each other, or united in interest and affection, as they formerly were. The best friends of our glorious cause see and lament that the bonds of our union are weakened, and that we do neither love as "brethren with a pure heart fervently," nor feel, as we ought, our obligation to bear one another's burdens, sympathize with each other in affliction, counsel in difficulties, and, to the utmost of our power, promote each other's temporal and eternal good. With all our public benevolence, we are defective in that christian love and charity which would lead us to serious, instructive, and pious converse when we meet; to unbosom our hearts for mutual edification, encouragement and comfort; and to pour out our souls in fervent prayer to God on each other's behalf. Oh! that every heaven-born spirit would emulate heaven in this grace of love! If we wish to see Zion built around us, let us both cultivate and express it in unremitted endeavours to strengthen one another's hands, encourage one another's heart, lighten the burdens of our fellow-christians, and help them forward on their way to glory.—In those times when the gospel gained the most signal triumphs, this was the remark, *See how these christians love*

one another : and when our churches flourish, and Zion is built, the same remark will be made. Then " Ephraim shall not envy Judah, Judah " shall not vex Ephraim ;" but that love which is of heavenly origin, characteristic of a discipleship to Christ, and the source of more happiness than I can paint ; will possess and warm every believer's heart, and bind the members of families, churches, and the christian world together. Should any seeds of dissention then be sown, the same spirit will prevail as dictated that address of Abraham to Lot, " let there be no strife between thee " and me ; between thy herdsmen and my herds- " men ; for we are brethren (n)." When that happy age that awaits the church is come, no hard thoughts, no dark or groundless suspicions will be indulged ; and no tender minds will be wounded, pious hearts broken, or christian societies rent in pieces by the unbrotherly, unchristian conduct of any. Then will those who belong to Christ eminently speak the language and breathe the spirit they learn of him ; and christian love and affection will be their governing principle in social life, in their church-relation, and mark their whole deportment. Oh ! that we may be able to trace the growth and prevalence of this grace, which is the bond of union among believers, the cement of pious spirits, and which hath the most favourable aspect on the growth and prosperity of churches !

When Zion is built, the state of things will be such as to promise stability. The foundation on which

(n) Gen. xiii. 8.

which professors will then build will be laid low—laid with care—and the structure will rise firm and strong. They will stand prepared for every attack. Instead of being the sport of lust and passion—"tossed about with every wind of doctrine;" inconstant and wavering in their principles, regards and profession; they will hold fast the truth as it is in Jesus; never relax in their pursuit of gospel blessings: but keep close to Christ at all events, and resolve, in the strength of their God, to live and die his disciples.

And I must also remark, that when Zion is built, the presence of God will be eminently in it. The melancholy words, "here God once dwelt" which is all that can now be said of many a place, will not be used within her walls. Where numbers, once dead in sin, are made alive by the word and grace of Christ—where those who are awakened and converted, stand fast in their faith and adorn their profession—and, whilst they constitute a church, are held together by the bonds of love; God does reveal and manifest himself; and the language of the church of old may be adopted, "thou, Lord, art in the midst of us—and we are called "by thy name—leave us not (*o*)."

The Psalmist speaking of the city of God, says "God is in the "midst of her; she shall not be moved (*p*)."

And the great God himself speaking of Jerusalem in reference to an happy period approaching, says "For I will be unto her a wall of fire round about, "and will be the glory in the midst of her (*q*)."

If

(*o*) Jer. xiv. 9.

(*p*) Psal. xlv. 5.

(*q*) Zech. ii. 5.

If there be any thing on this low earth on which Jehovah looks down from heaven with pleasure, it is the man who hath received Christ into his inmost soul, and who, ever true to his principles, stands his ground amidst all opposition, and gives daily proof that the bonds subsisting between him and his Redeemer are such as nothing can break. That the Father's guiding, protecting, supporting, cheering presence will ever attend a believing pious people, is what we have abundant reason from his own word to expect: and, oh! if religion was but alive in the souls of Britons—if that foundation which Divine grace lays was laid in every heart, and built upon daily—and the holy fire of love and devotion burnt in every breast; we should find that God was in the midst of us of a truth.

From this view of Zion, when “her walls are
“salvation and her gates praise, and she the joy
“of the whole earth;” let me turn your thoughts to this great truth, namely, that whenever, or wherever, this is the state of Zion, it is the Lord's work.

That it is the province of Jehovah to build up Zion may be learnt

1. From *his own word*, which is the highest authority.

It is its uniform language that the wise and gracious plan was his, and that to him belonged the execution of it in all its various parts. The glorious scheme which the gospel unfolds—the propagation

pagation of the gospel among Jews and Gentiles—and its establishment and subsistence in this guilty world ; are ascribed to the grace and power of God. Every triumph the gospel hath had in raising the dead in sin, evangelizing the legal, drawing the image of Christ upon souls, and edifying believers ; is spoken of in the word of truth as his work. In what a ruinous state would this world have lain—and what, O believer, would the state of thy soul have been this moment—if the mercy and grace of an offended God had not stood forth in the person of his own Son ? I appeal to those present, who are conversant with the holy scriptures, whether this is not their language that believers in whatever age or place they live, are the birth of his eternal counsel, the purchase of his Son's blood ; and that to him it is owing that there is a single church, or even a believer upon earth.

The agency of the Spirit of God for moral and divine purposes was an essential part of that plan that was concerted in heaven, and made known to us in the gospel, and in the experience of the pious. Besides those miraculous gifts (to which some would confine the Spirit's operation) he attended the preaching of the apostles—wrought deep conviction of the truth and importance of the gospel on the hearts of men—and formed those great and illustrious characters which are on record as examples for our imitation, and striking monuments of that happy change which the gospel, when in such hands, can produce.

The Psalmist, cxvii. Ps. and the beginning, ascribes the building of Jerusalem, the gathering together

gether the outcasts of Israel, the healing the broken in heart, and the binding up their wounds; to the same glorious being who "tells the number of the stars and calleth them all by their names." And the language of God himself by the Prophet Ezekiel is this: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them (s)." In the same chapter He says, "Then the heathen that are left around you shall know that I the Lord build the ruined places, and plant that that was desolate. I the Lord have spoken it, and I will do it (t)." When Peter in answer to our Lord's question said "Thou art Christ the Son of the living God," Jesus replied, "Blessed art thou Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee; but my Father who is in heaven (u)." The apostles, after the example of their divine Master, ascribed that energy and power which attended their preaching, and that surprizing change it wrought, to the agency of the Spirit. Paul speaking of believers says, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works (x)." Whatever the Corinthians had been in their unconverted state, he says, "But ye are washed; but ye are sanctified, but

(s) Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 27, 28.

(t) verse 36.

(u) Matt. xvi. 16, 17.

(x) Eph. ii. 10.

“ but ye are justified in the name of the Lord
 “ Jesus and by the Spirit of our God (y).” In
 another place he says, “ For we are labourers to-
 “ gether with God: ye are God’s husbandry; ye
 “ are God’s building (z).” From these few pas-
 sages it must appear that we can have no well-
 grounded expectation that Zion will be built, or
 that our respective churches will flourish, without
 the power and grace of God. If the gospel, my
 Friends! is not a sealed book to you—if you enter
 into its design and spirit; experience its power to
 search, alarm, convince, allure, sanctify, and save
 the soul; and are the “ epistles of Christ written
 “ not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living
 “ God;” bow daily at the feet of that God with
 all the gratitude and love the human heart can
 feel.

2. If we attend to the *Building* itself, it must
 appear whose work and province it is to raise it.

The sun, moon, and stars, however they may
 strike the eye, are far less glorious than the church
 of God. It hath every mark and character of a di-
 vine hand, and is (what mere material systems cannot
 be) a display of every perfection of God. There is
 nothing we behold which, if attentively considered,
 looks so much like a work of God as the raising a
 church in this fallen world, or the beginning and
 progress of virtue and piety in the human heart.
 Take a believer—attend him from his first con-
 viction of sin and danger—from that hour in
 which his prayer was “ help, Lord! I perish”—

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until

(y) 1 Cor. vi. 2.

(z) 1 Cor. iii. 9.

until he rise to the realms of glory. Is it to be supposed that such a change as that must be in which regeneration consists, would take place; savage natures become humane, gentle, lovely; the scourges of mankind, become their greatest blessing; and a feeble saint, amidst unnumbered enemies, difficulties, and dangers, make his way to heaven; without the guiding, strengthening, and protecting arm of God? When I consider what the christian is, the principles by which he is actuated, the spirit he possesses, the attainments he makes, the calm fortitude and dignity with which he meets affliction and death, and that unparalleled heroism which multitudes have displayed in persecuting times; I can be at no loss to know, independent of the word of God, whose work and province it must be to build up Zion at large, the church in Britain, or those christian societies to which we belong.

And I might direct your attention

3. To the *Materials* of which Zion is composed.

What were the ruins in which Jerusalem was laid by the Assyrian or Roman armies, when compared with the state of the moral world by apostacy and guilt? When we consider the blindness of men, the hardness of the human heart, the very affecting contrariety there is in us to the holy nature and righteous law of God, the state of things in the world in a religious view when the Saviour appeared, and what is the real state of the unconverted in these times; does it not appear that the grace and power of God are requisite to raise a
church

church out of such materials? If I, who was once in the way to destruction, am now in the path of life—if my heart is become sensible, tender, and alive to every pious impression—if heaven and glory are begun within me, and I am daily preparing for them; I would, constant as the day, ascribe it to God. Every individual in the church of God may, and will adopt the apostle's language, "by grace I am what I am."

To build up Zion is, then, the province of Jehovah.

But I must drop in this place one hint of caution, namely, that God's working should not exclude our endeavours. Although the Lord speaks of himself as building Jerusalem of old, we are informed that the priests laid the foundation, and that the people had their respective parts of the wall to repair; and that some, on account of the situation of their houses, repaired those parts of the wall which were over against them (a). Persons in every station have something to do; which if not done, there is no reason to believe that godliness will flourish in churches, families, or in the hearts

(a) Henry. "Of some it is said, that they repaired *over against their own houses*, Neh. iii. 10, 23, 28, 29. and of one, who it is likely was only a lodger, that he repaired *over against his chamber*, ver. 30. When a general good work is to be done each should apply themselves to that part of it that falls nearest them, and within their reach. if every one will sweep before his own door, the street will be clean; if every one will mend one we shall be all mended. If he who hath but a chamber, will repair before that, he does his part."

hearts of individuals. It is not more plain from the inspired word whose province it is to build up Zion, than that God expects and requires that we be found in the use of means. The language of every real convert will be "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" The agency of God for moral and divine purposes is so far from being a reason why we should not exert ourselves, that it is the greatest encouragement, and most cogent motive we know. If I have not a heart to attend where the word of God is preached; to read it for myself; and to beg of God that he would carry on in my soul the work of faith with power; I have not one stone of the divine building laid within me.

To build Zion is not only the work and province of God; but

III. It is a work in which He will certainly engage.

My text expresses a pleasing persuasion of this with respect to Zion of old. Blessed be God that his church in Britain is not a heap of ruins! The tabernacle of God is yet among us, and incense does still ascend from many a heart. There are, I trust, many seven thousands in our British Israel, who have not bowed the knee unto Baal. Though there is reason to lament that many breaches are made, that there are many waste places among us, and that the love of professors waxes cold; there are monuments still of the grace and power of God; and I congratulate you, my Reverend Fathers

Fathers and Brethren, that your ministry is not without its seals.

But a brighter and more glorious day than ever hath been seen, does yet await the church of God, From the perfections of Jehovah—from the personal dignity and glory of the Redeemer, the scenes he passed through; and the characters he now sustains—from the preparation that was made for his appearing among men—from Christianity's having nothing of a local nature, but being equally suited to the state and condition of all who inhabit this wide world—and also from the circumstance of the gospel's having stood the test of the strictest enquiry for more than seventeen hundred years, and the strongest objections that have been made to it only serving to clear and illustrate its evidence; it appears exceedingly probable that the kingdom of Christ will more fully come, and his religion have a more splendid and glorious triumph.

But the main pillar of our hope with respect to this delightful subject are the promises and declarations of Him to whom nothing is impossible. "Ask of me," says God to his Son, "and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession (b)." It is foretold by the Prophet Isaiah that "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea (c)." The language of David to his God was "all nations which thou hast made shall come and worship before thee, and shall glorify thy name (d)." In the
book

(b) Psalm ii. 8. (c) Isaiah xi. 9. (d) Psalm xxxvi. 9.

book of Daniel it is foretold that the "Saints of the most High shall take the kingdom and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever (e)." And God himself says, "from the rising of the sun even to the going down of the same my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered to me, and a pure offering, and my name shall be great among the Heathen (f). On the truth and faithfulness of God to his word and promise we ground our hope and belief that religion will have a revival, our churches be increased, the boundaries of the Redeemer's kingdom enlarged, the gospel rise superior to all opposition, this world be as one vast temple, and the Saviour have disciples and Jehovah worshippers in every country. We know not when the "set time to favour Zion" will come. This article, like many others, is a secret still in the counsels of Jehovah: but that a time is set, and that it will arrive, must be admitted, for we have the authority of God himself.

When that time is come towards which we now look with pleasing hope—when our churches shall flourish, the Zion of God in Britain be built, and the religion of the gospel become the religion of the world, then

IV. The Lord will appear in his glory. "When the Lord, &c."

There is not a creature in the intellectual, animal, vegetable, fossil, or mineral kingdoms, or in the

(e) Ch. vii. 18.

(f) Mal. i. 2.

the whole compass of being, but reflects, some way or other, the glory of God. All his works praise Him in every period of his reign, and in every part of his vast dominions. The more minutely we examine them the more traces of wisdom and power shall we discern, and the higher will our admiration rise.—But there is nothing we know of can reflect so much glory on God as his interposition by his Son for the salvation of fallen creatures, the raising the dead in sin to newness of life, and forming them to a growing meetness for engaging in the employ, and relishing the bliss of heaven. Where is that human or angelic mind that hath any conception how the perfections of Jehovah could have been displayed in so striking a manner as in the gospel dispensation, in the persons of the Redeemer and the redeemed; and as they will be when prophecy shall become history, and the boundaries of Zion and the world be the same? Here infinite honour is done to the law and government of God; and those moral perfections, of the divine nature, which all the material systems in the universe could not display, harmonize, and shine with inexpressible lustre. What is that attribute, of which we can form any idea, which is not glorified when sinners are stopt in their dreadful career, the captive slaves of sin released, churches raised and brought into a flourishing state, and every kingdom in this fallen world become a place of education for heaven? The Redeemer's interest and kingdom are the prime work of God, the joy of the whole earth, that for which the world does now subsist, and which will survive its fiery

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doom.

doom. Where they are established and flourish, what is most dreadful in the curse is known no more, the lost dignity of man is restored, and whilst paradise springs afresh the God and Father of Jesus is exalted. Every believer is a monument raised to the glory of God ; and every victory the gospel gains is a display of those very perfections in which his greatest glory consists.

When faith and piety prevail among men, the Lord will appear in the glory of his *Wisdom*. This perfection shines whenever a single soul is converted : how much more when the question shall be “ who are these that fly as a cloud, and as doves “ to their windows (g);” and when the glorious fruits and effects of the Redeemer’s undertaking, death and intercession shall be abundantly visible ! On the arrival of that bright day, for the dawn of which we look with hope and pleasure, when gospel truth shall meet with a ready reception into the very hearts of men—when He “ who is the “ power of God and the wisdom of God (b)” shall become dear to the understanding and affection of myriads—and nothing be more evident than that the design and tendency of the christian dispensation is to reinstate man in that in which his safety, dignity and happiness consist, without the least violence being offered to the justice and holiness of God ; the divine wisdom will not only be conspicuous, but become the admiration of men. Whatever opinion may now be formed by some of the way revealed in the gospel in which “ God may “ be just, and the justifier of him who believes in “ Jesus ;”

(g) Isaiah lx. 8. (b) 1 Cor. i. 24.

“ Jesus ;” when Zion is built the united language of its citizens will be that of the Apostle “ Oh “ the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and “ knowledge of God (i).”

When Zion is built in the world at large, or in any particular place, the Lord will appear in the glory of his *Power*. The serious and truly enlightened soul will be more struck with the power that saves, than with that which makes a world. What display can there be of this divine attribute at once so honourable to God and happy to man as “ quickening the dead in trespasses and sins ;” causing the blind to see, the deaf to hear, the insensible to feel, and changing the corrupt and sinful bias of the human heart ? Every conquest the gospel makes, in whatever age or place, reflects a glory on divine power ; for the “ gospel is the “ power of God unto salvation to every one that “ believes, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile (k).” By what are believers strengthened for duty, raised when fallen, protected from their numerous and formidable enemies, and “ kept “ through faith unto salvation ;” but by his “ Almighty power” exerted in a way suited to the nature of man as free and intelligent ? Whenever the revival of religion is signal, and churches flourish, the “ eyes of men’s understanding being enlightened, they will know, not only what is the hope “ of his calling, and what the riches of the glory “ of his inheritance in the saints ; but what is the “ exceeding greatness of his power toward them “ who believe (l).”

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When

(i) Rom. xi. 33. (k) Rom. i. 16. (l) Eph. i. 18, 19.

When Zion is built God will appear in the glory of his *Grace* and *Love*. The kindness of God is widely diffused. Even that man lives upon it who excludes his Maker, Preserver and Benefactor from his heart and thoughts. On a survey of the worlds of nature and providence it is difficult to determine which perfection God hath most displayed, whether his wisdom, power, or kindness. But there is a world which is eminently the world of grace—a world in which that is displayed which is most interesting to guilty creatures, and exprest in scripture by every name that is most intimate to man, and dear to the human heart. The “grace of God” is spoken of as that “which bringeth salvation(*m*).” The gospel is styled “the gospel of the grace of God(*n*):” and believers are said to be “to the praise of the glory of his grace” wherein he hath made them accepted in the beloved(*o*).” The grace and love of God in Christ lie at the foundation of our hopes, and appear and shine in every part of the work of man’s redemption. I have no conception how they could be displayed in so astonishing a manner as in the person and undertaking of the Redeemer. An individual convert is a display of the grace of God. Think, then, of a church built up—of the places where we worship crouded with such as have “been brought out of darkness into marvelous light”—and of the redeemed being a multitude “out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation.” How illustrious will the grace of God then

(*m*) Tit. ii. 2. (*n*) Acts. xx. 24. (*o*) Eph. i. 16.

then appear: that grace in which (as we learn from his language to Moses) (*p*) his greatest glory consists! Great God! hasten this long wished-for period for the glory of thy grace as well as the happiness of thy creature man! I shall only add, that

When the Lord shall build up Zion he will appear in the glory of his *Truth* and *Faithfulness*. When the number of the converted shall be increased on every side, the boundaries of the Messiah's kingdom eminently enlarged, and "Gentiles come to his light, and kings to the brightness of his rising;" God will appear to be faithful to every engagement into which he entered with his Son, and to every promise which his word contains. This will be the universal acknowledgment, when that glorious æra which awaits the world shall come; "The Lord hath done that which he devised; he hath fulfilled the word that he commanded in the days of old; there hath failed not aught of any good thing the Lord hath spoken; all hath come to pass."

God does now appear glorious in what we see of Zion, which is great even in ruins, and her very dust precious: but in what glory he will appear before the doom of time and nature shall be pronounced, is beyond the reach of our finite powers to know. In the mean time let the "glory of the Lord be seen upon us (*q*)"—let us "not stagger at the promise through unbelief"—but whilst we are looking toward future years and ages, or onward to the world's last period, be saying "Amen: blessing

(*p*) Exod. xxxiii. 18, 19.

(*q*) Isaiah lx. 2.

“ blessing and glory, and wisdom and thanksgiving
 “ and honour and power and might be unto our
 “ God for ever and ever (r).”

On a review of what hath been advanced let us
 1. Rejoice in, and be grateful to God for what
 he hath done, and is still doing, towards building
 up Zion.

The interest which we ourselves, and our fellow-
 creatures have in Zion is beyond the power of lan-
 guage to express. What is the world of nature or of
 providence to me who am a fallen sinful creature,
 however they may display the power, the wisdom,
 and the general goodness of God? It is that grace
 of Jehovah that gave birth to the gospel dispensa-
 tion that causes me to triumph in my being, and
 bless the hand that brought me into it. If I am a
 citizen of Zion, I more than exist—I live and am
 happy. Many great and amazing steps have been
 taken for the introduction, establishment and in-
 crease of the Redeemer’s interest. Many churches
 have been formed, have flourished, and been taken
 to glory: and He “ who is excellent in counsel and
 “ wonderful in working” may even now be prepar-
 ing the way for the universal spread of the christian
 faith and religion. Let every heart here be grate-
 ful to God for what may be seen of his glory in that
 part of Zion which is built in Britain, and among
 ourselves. Trace with pleasure and praise every
 instance in which God hath glorified his wisdom,
 his power, his grace and love, his faithfulness and
 truth,

truth, in raising us from those ruins in which we lay—in raising others—and building up souls to be an habitation for himself through the Spirit (s). If we, who might have been without God, without Christ, and without hope in the world, have each of these—if God is working “in us both to will” and to do of his own good pleasure”—if we, whatever our state once was, “as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ (t)” —and have in view an everlasting residence in the new Jerusalem; we never can want a subject of praise either to God, or to Him through the channel of whose death every blessing is conveyed. What is the most splendid building that art, power and wealth can raise—what was that Temple, the labour of an age, and the pride of a nation—when compared with the tabernacle of God that is now with men; and that building which is raised in the believer’s heart.

2. Let us rejoice in that great prosperity that awaits the christian cause; and let the church encourage herself under all her troubles?

If it be in the desert now, it shall not always be so. Though despised by some, and frowned upon by others, it shall have an universal triumph. The small stone that Nebuchadnezzar saw, “cut out of the mountain, without hands, smote the image, brake it in pieces, became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth (u).” Where is that genuine disciple of Christ, or that Friend to souls, who

(s) Eph. ii. 22.

(t) 1 Pet. ii. 5.

(u) Dan. ii. 34.

who does not look forward with pleasure to that time when righteousness shall run down our streets like a stream—the Redeemer's praises dwell on the tongues of millions in our land—and the whole world be christianized? Let us who preach the gospel forget our discouragements in the view and prospect of that time when ministers shall scarce have need to say "know the Lord; for all shall "know him from the least of them even to the "greatest (x)." Oh! that we might see the dawn of such a day before we die.

The church of God hath something to encourage her under every trouble. The cause in which her friends are engaged is a cause which the great Jehovah hath espoused—a cause with which his own glory is connected—and which he will not forsake. However discouraging appearances may at present be, whilst some of Zion's "walls are broken down, her gates burnt with fire," and the inroads great and affecting, which infidelity, the love of pleasure, vice and impiety have made; she will be built, and the builder is God. Though some of the aged among us may sit like "Eli by "the way-side watching, their hearts trembling "for the ark of God (y);" it will, I trust, never be said of Britain that "the glory is departed from "her for the ark of God is taken (z)." If we preach the gospel without success, some future ministers will not, for happier times are coming. Let us wrestle with God that the glorious day may dawn,

(x) Jer. xxxi. 34. (y) 1 Sam. iv. 13. (z) Ver. 22.

dawn, and dawn first upon us. If the remnant that remains would, like Daniel, confess the sins of the times, bewail them before God, and pour out their souls daily in fervent prayer, that we, as a people, might tread back every step we have taken from the principles and practice of the pious from whom we are descended; we should see far happier times than the present.

3. Let us all cherish an ardent desire of seeing the church of God in a more prosperous state, and manifest that desire by our utmost exertions in its favour.

There is every reason for our wishing the revival of religion in the church at large—in the churches to which we respectively belong—in our own families—and in our own hearts. If we have a heart that feels for the glory of God, the honour of the Redeemer, the best interests of our fellow-creatures, or our own present and everlasting good; we must wish the prosperous state of Zion. Nothing is more apparent than the close connexion there is between the prosperity of Zion and each of these. In the wish that Zion may be built every thing great and good is comprised.

But if, besides being my wish, it is not also my earnest and fervent prayer that I may be a building of God—that my family may be a house in Zion—that the church to which I stand related may be built up with numbers as a flock, and “increased with all the increase of God (a)” — that our British Israel may be as much distinguish-

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(a) Col. ii. 19.

ed by the prevalence of faith and piety as by the privileges long enjoyed—that the whole world may become christian—and that in this way, the great Redeemer may be honoured, and Jehovah “ appear in his glory ;” I am, myself, no part of Zion, whatever I may profess or be thought.

To our ardent wishes and most fervent prayers that Zion may be built, let us add our best and unremitting endeavours. If the God that made us—the God and Father of Jesus—our God, “ will appear in his glory” when the empire of sin and satan is contracted—when the ruins of the fall are built again—when our churches become numerous—and those who compose them are actuated by heavenly principles, adorned with heavenly graces, and animated by heavenly hopes ; how lost should we be to every pious and grateful feeling if the cause of God did not lie near our hearts, and if we did not exert ourselves to promote it in our own souls and in the souls of others ! Whatever stations we fill, whether of a public or private nature, the glory of God is an end we should never lose sight of.

Let us who are Ministers leave nothing untried that our churches may live—that the breaches made by death may be repaired—and that the rising generation may be ornaments and pillars when those who are at present such “ shall be “ made pillars in the temple of our God above, “ and go no more out (b).” Oh ! may we plead our great Master’s cause with a tender concern for souls, and that holy zeal which becomes it—may
multitudes

multitudes catch from us a flame of love and devotion—in the places where we assemble may the faith of many be increased, their hopes confirmed, and every thing advanced that can constitute and dignify the christian. If we had not a secret hope that some good is done when we assemble, and that God is carrying on his cause, what a painful employment would ours be!

But, whatever good may have been done among us, or additions made to our churches, there is yet much remaining to be done before religion can be said to be in a flourishing state. You who hear me this day have every motive to exert yourselves that the great interest of gospel-grace and truth may be promoted, as far as your influence does, or can extend, that Zion may be built and God appear in his glory where your lot is cast. We would fain persuade ourselves that you will second our endeavours—speak and act for God, Christ and religion—and that whatever can be done by admonition, example, or fervent prayer will, in divine strength, be attempted by you. If the cause of Christ, ye Parents, is a growing cause in the places where you live or assemble, you will have less reason to fear on your children's account when death shall remove you from them. Let a regard for the glory of God that noblest end of man, connecting itself with the tenderest feelings and fondest wishes of the parent's bosom, prompt you to do that for your offspring which Andrew did for his brother in bringing “him to Jesus (c).” Take them by the

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hand

hand to Him who alone can make them wise and good and happy. Plead his cause with them in the most faithful, affectionate and moving manner. Make the most just and engaging representation of religion, and so discharge a parent's duty that you may adopt an Apostle's language, " my children, " of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be " formed in you (*d*). " And let me request it of you all to cultivate zeal for the glory of God, and that cause by which, as you have heard, it will be promoted. See to it that, as far as in you lieth, grace and piety prevail. Be you the friends and advocates of both. Let the world see in you a satisfactory answer to every objection to Christ and the gospel which infidelity, whether ancient or modern, hath invented. By a dignity of deportment under the influence of christian principles, and his grace who builds up Zion ; and by constancy and firmness in the ways of Christ ; reprove the unbelieving, gay, thoughtless, and degenerate age in which you live. Let the world see that there are principles—that there is a religion—and that there are promises and aids, that can animate and support, adorn and dignify the human soul beyond every thing else that can be known or possessed upon earth. A pious regard for God—love to Christ—a genuine public and patriotic spirit—and that tender affection you feel for those who are most nearly allied to you, will, I trust, act powerfully upon you to spare no pains that what remains may be strengthened—that every breach may

may be repaired which sin, earth or hell may have made in the walls of Zion. For what better end can we live and act than to do good and glorify God? Let us remember for our encouragement that when we exert ourselves in our families—in our social and friendly connexions—or in those religious societies to which we belong, that religion may revive, the interest of our divine Redeemer be advanced, and the number of serious, praying, pious persons increased; that we are “workers together with God (e)” —that the cause in which we are engaged is His cause, and that He will sooner or later succeed, prosper, and reward the pious endeavours of every friend it hath,

Oh! that years and ages as they roll may leave this glorious cause in a state more prosperous than they find it, until that blest period arrive towards which we look with pleasing expectation. Amen.

(e) 2 Cor. vi. 1.

F I N I S.

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